

[4 May, 2007]

RAJYA SABHA

However, the breeder seed has not been converted fully into the foundation and certified seeds by the breeder seed indenting agencies leading to inadequate availability of quality seed to the farmers.

Food security to citizens

*429. SHRI MAHMOODA. MADANI:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) how Government plan to ensure that every citizen in the country can get enough food at affordable prices; and

(b) whether it is a fact that PDS is not able to supply enough food articles to the poorest of the poor during the last six months?

- THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) The Government is committed to ensure availability of food to all the citizens. To ensure this, continued increase in food production is necessary.

Government has designed and implemented a number of programmes to increase food production. These consist of enhanced investment in agriculture (both public and private investment) and support to agricultural sector in the form of input subsidies for fertilizers, irrigation and credit. To trigger high rate of growth in the agricultural sector and to make such a growth sustainable, in the recent past the Government has taken a number of initiatives such as:—

- (i) Credit Policy of 2004 for increased flow of credit to the agricultural sector;
- (ii) a package for revival of cooperative credit structure;
- (iii) launching of National Horticultural Mission in 2005 for increased diversification of agriculture;
- (iv) steps for expanding area under irrigation for improved water management, including watershed development and rain water harvesting; and
- (v) setting up of a National Rainfed Areas Authority.

With these initiatives, it is expected that food production in the country will continue to increase to keep pace with the increasing demand for foodgrains.

For ensuring food security particularly to the poor citizens, the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) is being operated. The TPDS is primarily focused to cover the Below Poverty Line (BPL) families. The poorest of the poor among them are covered specifically under the Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY). Foodgrains are also being distributed to States and Union Territories under various welfare schemes.

In addition to the quantities of foodgrains distributed through TPDS, the open market also takes care of the food needs of citizens. The Government keeps a continuous watch on the food situation and whenever there arise situations of shortage, the Government intervenes to import food items and makes them available in the market to augment supplies.

(b) No, Sir. Foodgrains are being distributed to BPL and AAY families all over the country under the TPDS @35 kg. per household per month. Out of the BPL families covered under the TPDS, the poorest among them are covered under Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) families. The quantities of foodgrains allocated to BPL and AAY families during the last six months and their Central Issue Prices are as follows:—

(i) Quantity allocated			(in lakh tonnes)
Category	Allocation	Offtake	%Offtake
BPL	90.35	72.25	79.9
AAY	47.41	44.27	93.4
TOTAL:	137.76	116.52	84.6
(ii) Central Issue Prices			(Rs. Per kg.)
Commodity	APL	BPL	AAY
Rice	8.30	5.65	3.00
Wheat	6.10	4.15	2.00